

Hereditry Chief Cause of Gout; Early Care Urged

By K. H. SUTHERLAND, M.D., County Health Officer

There are thousands upon thousands of people in this country who are periodically afflicted with gouty arthritis, and a large number of them do not realize the importance of getting early medical care. When treatment of this condition is long-neglected, it may become chronic and cause so much damage to afflicted joints that permanent disability or invalidism results.

Gouty arthritis, or gout as it is usually called, may occur in the susceptible young or old of either sex, but the victims are pre-eminently males over 40 years of age. This condition is not often found in children, however, or in women before the period of middle age.

It is now noted that gout is the result of an inherited metabolic disorder which permits abnormally large amounts of

acid to accumulate in the blood. Yet higher than normal levels of this chemical may sometimes be found in the blood of individuals who never develop gouty symptoms at all.

IT IS NOT clear just what the hereditary factor is but the inability of the body to handle or get rid of uric acid is characteristic of those who suffer gouty attacks. In these cases, there is usually a family history of the disease. The gouty attack may be triggered by an injury or irritation, by certain drugs or by any number of other things.

Through long, bygone centuries, the disorder was traditionally associated with high living, specifically an overabundance of rich foods and wines, but this theory is now largely discredited. However, during World War II cases of

gout were less frequent in those countries where certain protein foods were very scarce. It was noted that the occurrence of gout increased as these particular foods again became available.

Unless the inherited susceptibility was there, however, the eating of such foods would not cause an attack of the disease.

IN SOME PATIENTS with gouty arthritis, the disease seems to make slow progress or even none at all. Attacks remain fairly infrequent and apparently do not do any lasting damage.

In other cases, particularly when the disease appears before the age of 30, attacks become progressively more frequent and nodules of uric acid salts form between joints, and in tendons and cartilages (tophi or tophaceous deposits). Periods of quiescence, in which the individual is symptom-free, become less frequent, and a chronic condition ensues in which afflicted parts are permanently damaged.

The most common sign of the disorder is a sudden attack of pain which may occur in the wrist, finger, ankle, toe, or some other place in the body.

Swelling and redness, particularly swelling, may also appear. The attack usually lasts about a week or so and then disappears — usually to recur at a later date.

IN RECENT years there has been a great improvement both in the treatment of the gouty attack and also in its prevention. For control of the acute attack a variety of effective drugs is available to the physician. What is more important, proper medical management will often prevent future attacks.

When untreated or when proper medical treatment is not received, the condition is more likely to become chronic and more difficult to control. Even in these cases, however, medication and physical therapy can produce a remarkable improvement in the patient's condition.

Though people who have inherited the gouty tendency cannot get rid of it, they can prevent the pain and disablement that was once commonly associated with the disorder.

Adult Class In Dentistry

Adult Education Division of the Torrance schools will offer a course in dentistry beginning with the new semester.

The course, Dental Assistants Certification, will meet on Monday and Thursday evenings at Torrance High School. It was designed by school officials and members of the Harbor and Western Dental Soci-

ties to train needed dental assistants.

Although the course is a college-level class, none of the area's junior colleges or state colleges now offer it. Resource speakers from dental associations in the area, and members of the faculty of the University of California College of Dentistry will be used to supplement classwork.

Over 130,000 people of all ages read the HERALD!

Law in Action

The Chief Justice of the United States heads the Supreme Court, but except for presiding and a few ceremonial duties, his work is much like that of the other justices. In fact his vote on a decision counts only as one.

In ceremonies, he leads when the justices walk in a procession. As a rule, he gives the oath to the President at his inauguration. Should a President be impeached, he presides at the Senate hearings.

OF THE associate justices, only one, Samuel Chase (1796 to 1811) has been impeached, that is, ACCUSED of a wrong for which the Senate could remove him. Chase did lack "judicial impeachment," he made political speeches and denounced the President from the bench. But such things are not crimes. His impeachment failed. The Senate would not remove him from office.

How can we be sure that a man will become a just, honest, and able justice of the Su-

Freeways May Get Phone System Soon

The State Highway Commission should set as its New Year's resolution the installation of an emergency telephone system to all Los Angeles County freeways, according to a county supervisor.

Supervisor Kenneth Hahn noted that during the holiday season he has seen several instances where emergency communication on the freeways would have benefited the public.

"Just last week I saw a family of six have to leave their stalled car on the Pasadena freeway and walk to an off ramp in heavy traffic," Hahn said.

Street Light Petition in Circulation

Residents on Central Avenue between 190th and Turmont streets are circulating petitions for six additional street lights in the area.

Acceptance of the petition and approval of the project by the county Board of Supervisors would result in new 4,000-lumen lights along Central Avenue.

The proposed district is bounded by 190th, Turmont Street, Central Avenue and Avalon Boulevard. The petition first must have the signatures of 20 or more taxpayers in the lighting district before the board can consider the request.

Trustees Call Special Meeting On Data System

A special meeting of the Board of Education will be held next Tuesday at noon to review a report on data processing equipment for the Torrance Unified School District.

The meeting was called to order to study reports submitted to the trustees in December for an initial data processing facility.

The board will meet at 3:30 p.m. the same day with members of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors to review a report on the schools prepared by the Chamber's school affairs committee.

preme Court? What are his legal qualifications?

NOTE: The Constitution sets no formal requirements. He does not have to be a lawyer, though all of them have been. The President may name any one he chooses; and, with U.S. Senate approval, he goes on the bench.

But the informal qualifications of a justice of the Supreme Court are great. For a seat in the U. S. Supreme Court is a lawyer's highest honor.

BEFORE A PERSON goes on that high bench, should anyone doubt of his character or learning, the Senate holds hearings and can refuse to confirm this appointment. And this has happened.

And then it is up to the President to name another and another, until the Senate confirms his nominee. The Senate cannot nominate its own candidate; it can only approve or disapprove the President's.

Membership of the U. S. Supreme Court changes quite often. Justices take office for life, but a fair number retire from time to time for health reasons. For as a rule, such honors come late in life.

Note: California lawyers offer this column so you may know about our laws.

Hi-Shear Earnings At High

Earnings of the Hi-Shear Corp. for the first nine months of 1963 have shown a sharp increase over profits for fiscal 1962, reports George S. Wing, president of the Torrance firm.

Wing said net earnings for the period ended Nov. 30, 1963, were \$317,000, equal to 61 cents a share on the 515,340 outstanding share of common stock. Earnings for the same period last year were \$68,000, about 13 cents per share.

In a report to the shareholders Wing said net sales for the period were \$5,652,100, a new high for any comparable period. Total sales were up 24 per cent over a year ago.

Backlog orders were reported to be \$1.5 million—up more than 15 per cent over the same period last year.

In closing, Wing commented that the record sales and earnings represented substantial increases in all phases of the firm's business. "Our progress during the past nine months has been very gratifying," said Wing, "and we look forward to continued progress well into the foreseeable future."

Education Office to Review Laws

Dr. Bruce Wagner, a consultant for the Torrance Unified School District, will attend a legislative review session in San Francisco Friday, Jan. 17. The session is being conducted by the United States Office of Education.

The session is being held to review the provisions of newly-enacted federal statutes dealing with special educational programs.

Dr. J. H. Hull, superintendent of schools, said there is a possibility Torrance may be able to acquire funds under the Vocational Education Act of 1963.

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